

Part 1 - Public

Minutes of the Bar Standards Board meeting

Thursday 30 July 2026 (5.00 pm)

Hybrid Meeting, Rooms 1.4-1.7, BSB Offices & MS Teams

- Present:** Professor Chris Bones (Chair)
Gisela Abbam OBE
Jeff Chapman KC
Professor Jean-Noël Ezingearde – via Teams
Emir Feisal JP
Ruby Hamid – via Teams
Sara Lawson KC – via Teams
Tracey Markham
Andrew Mitchell KC
Abiodun Olatokun – via Teams
Ruth Pickering
- By invitation:** Mark Fenhalls KC (Observer) – via Teams
Jim Morris (Chief Executive, Bar Council)
Lucinda Orr (Treasurer, Bar Council)
Andy Russell (Director, Council of the Inns of Court) – via Teams
Heidi Stonecliffe KC (Vice Chair, Bar Council) – via Teams
- BSB Executive:** Rebecca Forbes (Head of Governance)
Lyndy Geddes (Chief Operating Officer) – via Teams
Phil Golding (Director General)
Saima Hirji (Director of Regulatory Enforcement) – via Teams
Alex Kuczynski (Director of Legal & Information Management)
Ewen Macleod (Director of Strategy, Policy & Insights)
John Picken (Governance Officer)
Lila Pleban (Communications Consultant)
Debbie Stimpson (Business Consultant)
- Resource Group:** Richard Cullen (Director of Finance)

Item 1 – Welcome / Announcements

1. The Chair welcomed those present, in particular Abiodun Olatokun who was attending his first Board meeting. He noted that this also applied to Rebecca Thomas (recently appointed Head of Equality and Access to Justice) who was due to attend for an item in Part 2 of the meeting. He also welcomed Mark Fenhalls KC who was present as an observer prior to formally joining the Board (due on 1 October 2026).
2. He congratulated Gisela Abbam who was awarded an OBE in the King's Birthday Honours and former Bar Council Chair, Barbara Mills KC, who was awarded a Life Peerage in the Prime Minister's Resignation Honours.

3. He also noted, with regret, that this is likely to be the last Board meeting attended by Andrew Mitchell KC, who stands down from the Board on 30 September 2026. A further meeting is scheduled on 7 September 2026, but he is likely to be unavailable. In view of this, the Chair wished to highlight Andrew's outstanding contribution to the Board over the past 12 years and, prior to that, as a member of the former Professional Conduct Committee for eight years.

4. **Item 2 – Apologies**

- Kirsty Brimelow KC (Bar Council Chair)
- Steve Haines (Consultant)

Item 3 – Members' interests and hospitality

5. None.

Item 4 – Approval of Part 1 (public) minutes (Annex A)

6. The Board **approved** the Part 1 (public) minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2026.

Item 5a – Matters arising & Action List

7. Phil Golding referred to the point on the action list about provision of a cost estimate for first-tier data collections by the BSB (min). He explained that this action was, in effect, closed insofar as a commitment to complete this task is now underway. The necessary data collection will take place during early 2027.
8. In response to a question to the Chair, Heidi Stonecliffe KC agreed that the action point could be removed from the list on the understanding that this data will be made available next year (by which time, she will be Chair of the Bar Council).

9. **AGREED**

to note the report and to remove min 17e – 25/09/25 from the action list (cf. min 8).

JP to note

Item 5b – Forward agenda

10. The Board **noted** the forward agenda list.

Item 6 – Director General's Report – Public Session

BSB 044 (26)

11. Phil Golding highlighted the following:
- the outcome of the Board's Strategy Away Day (25 June 2026). This included discussion on longer-term considerations around:
 - the barrister lifecycle;
 - the role of the regulator throughout that period;
 - the BSB's future Target Operating Model (TOM);
 - our continuing focus on the business plan and the associated work to improve performance and meet key performance indicator (KPI) targets;
 - reference to a "two plus three" strategy which reflects this shorter-term business activity together with the development and implementation of longer-term strategic goals as identified at the Away Day.

12. With reference to performance, he stated that:
- the Contact and Assessment Team (CAT) has met, and is exceeding, KPI targets;
 - the knock-on effect of this greater throughput on already higher volumes of reports has been an increase in workload for the Investigations & Enforcement (I&E) Team. In consequence, I&E is not yet reaching its KPI targets but progress towards this goal remains on track;
 - we are also seeking to identify process improvements to increase efficiency, for example we now have access to expert business optimisation skills.
13. He added that:
- we are also investigating options for a “digital front door” aimed at improving the “triaging” of incoming service requests;
 - we now have an agreed protocol in place for working with the Bar Council’s Commissioner for Conduct;
 - our consultation on the Enforcement Regulations has closed and generated several helpful responses from stakeholders. We shall now progress with plans for change, particularly around the Bar Tribunal and Adjudication Services (BTAS) to improve turnaround times;
 - the BSB’s newly formed Education & Training Committee met for the first time on 23 July 2026;
 - we are reviewing the number and type of waivers currently available with a longer-term aim of then streamlining and automating the remainder. There remains a backlog of authorisations applications which we are continuing to address.
14. **AGREED**
to note the report.

Item 7 – 2025-26 BSB Performance Report – Public Session
BSB 045 (26)

15. The Board **agreed** to note the report.

Item 8 – Governance documents (IDB and Delegations)
BSB 046 (26)

16. Rebecca Forbes introduced the paper which concerned:
- the appointment terms of Office Holders of the Independent Decision-making Body (IDB);
 - clarifying that the Board’s previous resolution granting the Director General the authority to make and amend their sub-delegation to the executive also extends to their role as “Commissioner”; and
 - a minor change in the wording of delegation 97 concerning Interim Suspension Regulations.
17. **AGREED**
- a) to approve the amendments to the Board’s Appointments Policy as set out in the paper ie that:
- a person can serve nine years in total as an IDB member and the Chair or nine years in total as an IDB member and the Vice Chair;

- the Chair of the IDB may nominate an alternate, who shall be a member of the IDB, to take their place for any panel convened which they are unable to attend.
- b) to confirm that the Board's previous resolution granting the Director General (DG) the authority to make and amend sub-delegations to the executive also extends to the DG's role as Commissioner.
- c) note the amendment to the Scheme of Delegations (delegation 97), as described in paragraph 13 of the report, to reflect the amended wording of the relevant Interim Suspension Regulations.

Item 9 – Chair's Report on Visits and External Meetings

BSB 047 (26)

18. The Board **noted** the report.

Item 10 – Any other business

19. None.

Item 11 – Dates of next meetings

20. • Monday 7 September 2026 (5.45 pm) – private, single-issue meeting: online only
- Thursday 1 October 2026 (5.00 pm) – ordinary meeting.

Item 12 – Private Session

21. The Board resolved to consider the following items in private session:
- (1) Approval of Part 2 (private) minutes – 21 May 2026.
 - (2) Matters arising and action points – Part 2.
 - (3) Outcome of Strategy Away Day – Actions & Priorities
 - (4) a) Performance Report: Private Session
b) Voluntary Undertakings and proposals around October re-set
 - (5) Corporate Risk Report
 - (6) Feedback from the ETC / GRA / PSP Committees.
 - (7) Post Office Cases – update
 - (8) Harman review update
 - (9) LSB report: Mazur case
 - (10) Enforcement Regulations Consultation
 - (11) Board re-appointments
22. The meeting finished at 5.20 pm.